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ABSTRACT

Approximately 28 million persons in the United States, including about 5 million school-age children, have native languages other than English or live in households in which languages other than English are spoken. These are among the findings released by the National Center for Education Statistics from the Spring 1976 Survey of Income and Education. Other findings are summarized under the following headings: (1) proportion of language-minority persons in the United States; (2) the largest language group; (3) other language minority groups; (4) location of language-minority persons; (5) percentage of language-minority persons in the various states; (6) language minority birthplaces; (7) language minority children of school age; (8) source of data; and (9) related reports. Six tables are included. (AMH)

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National Center for Education Statistics

BULLETIN

78B-5

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE / Education Division

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GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION, NATIVITY, AND AGE DISTRIBUTION OF LANGUAGE MINORITIES* IN THE UNITED STATES: SPRING 1976

Approximately 28 million persons in the United States, including about 5 million school-age children, have mother tongues other than English or live in households in which languages other than English are spoken. About two-thirds of all these persons and more than four-fifths of the school-age children are native born. These are among the findings released by Marie D. Eldridge, Administrator of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), from the spring 1976 Survey of Income and Education (SIE). Other findings are summarized below and displayed in the attached tabulations and maps.

PROPORTION OF LANGUAGE-MINORITY PERSONS IN THE UNITED STATES

- One person in eight in the United States had a non-English-language background. Of school-age children (6-18 years old), one in ten had such a background.

LARGEST LANGUAGE GROUP

- The specific language background of more than a third of all language minority persons and 60 percent of the school-age children in this group was Spanish. Spanish-language background persons numbered 10.6 million.

OTHER LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS

- There were nearly three million each in the Italian- and German-language minority groups, and nearly two million in the French group. There were nearly two million persons whose language backgrounds were Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean or Vietnamese.

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*Persons of any age whose usual or second household language is not English, or, if over 14 years of age, whose mother tongue is other than English, whether or not they usually speak English (also termed "non-English-language background").

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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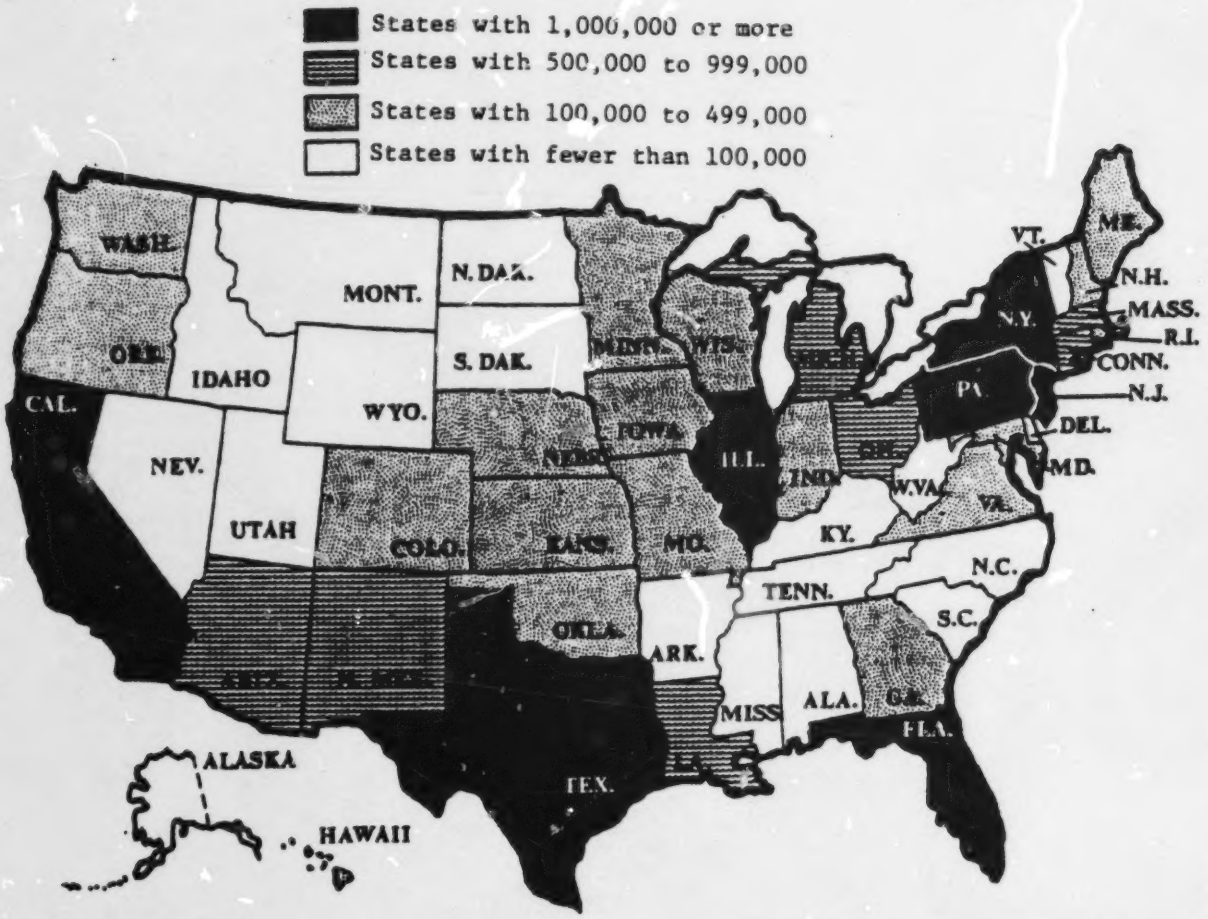
LOCATION OF LANGUAGE-MINORITY PERSONS



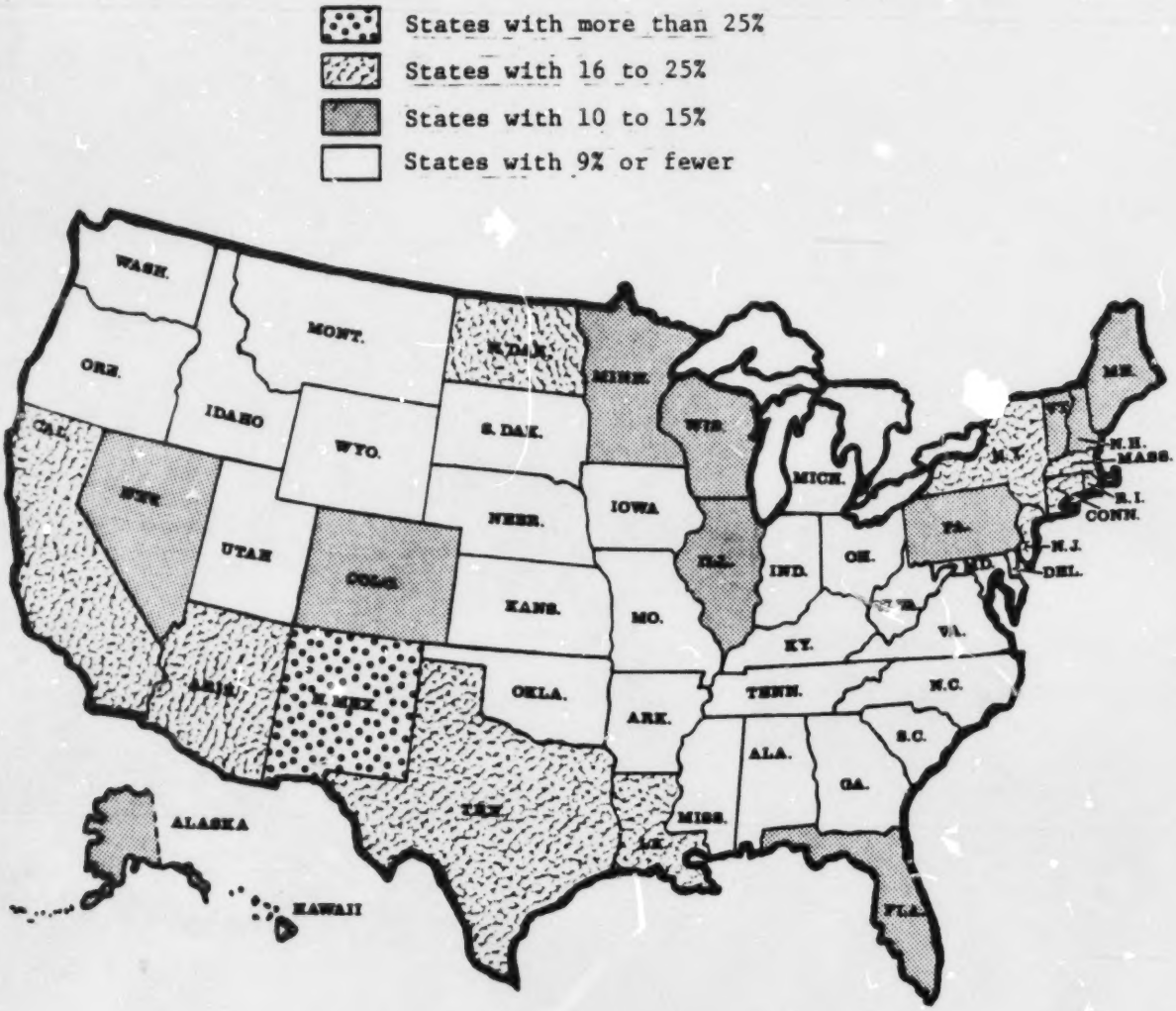
- Language-minority persons were located in every State in the Union. However, seven States had more than a million language-minority persons, seven had between 500,000 and a million, and an additional 18 States had between 100,000 and 500,000 such persons.

- Spanish-language background persons were located in all regions and States. However, three out of five were located in five States of the Southwest--Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. These five States plus New York, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey accounted for about 90 percent of the Spanish-language background population.

- More than one-fourth of French-language background persons lived in Louisiana, and another 40 percent in the States of the Northeast, principally Maine, Massachusetts, and New York.

- Each of ten widely-separated States had 100,000 or more persons of German-language background.

PERCENTAGE OF LANGUAGE-MINORITY PERSONS IN THE VARIOUS STATES



0 Language-minority persons constituted at least 10 percent of the total population in each of 23 States.

- Almost 40 percent of the persons with Chinese-, Japanese-, Filipino-, Korean- or Vietnamese-language backgrounds lived in California. Other large concentrations of Asian-language background persons resided in Hawaii and New York. These three States together accounted for over 60 percent of this population.

LANGUAGE MINORITY BIRTHPLACES

- Two out of three persons in the United States with language backgrounds other than English were born in the fifty States, Puerto Rico, or another U.S. territory.

- Approximately seven out of ten persons with European-language backgrounds and nearly two-thirds of Japanese-language background persons were native born. In contrast, the majority of persons with Filipino-, Chinese-, Korean- and Vietnamese-language backgrounds were born in foreign countries.

LANGUAGE MINORITY CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE

- About one in five language minority persons is a school-age child. There were over 5 million such children in the United States. Three million of them were of Spanish-language background, constituting about 60 percent of all language minority persons under age 19.

- Nearly half of school-age children in New Mexico were from non-English-language backgrounds. Such children made up more than a quarter of the school-age populations in Arizona, Texas, and Hawaii. In nine other States, children from non-English-language backgrounds were at least 10 percent of their age groups.

SOURCE OF DATA

The Survey of Income and Education (SIE) was conducted by the Bureau of the Census in spring 1976. The SIE questions on language background and current usage were developed by NCES, which provided partial financial support to augment the SIE sample and to add the language questions.

The survey sample consisted of 51 independent State samples that totaled about 160,000 occupied households. Personal interviews were completed in nearly 95 percent of these households. For methodological details about the SIE, see such reports as "Assessment of the Accuracy of the Survey of Income and Education," report to Congress, as mandated by the Education Amendments of 1974, submitted by the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, dated January, 1978.

RELATED REPORTS

The SIE provides, for the first time in U.S. history, State estimates of current language usage as well as language backgrounds. In part, the SIE helps to satisfy a congressional mandate to NCES (P.L. 93-380, section 105)

to report the number of school-age children and adults with non-English-language backgrounds who have limited English-speaking ability. A companion to this bulletin on the school progress and drop-out rates of language-minority persons has recently been released. Another bulletin relating to place of birth and language characteristics of persons of Hispanic origin is currently in preparation. A future report to the Congress, as called for in P.L. 93-380, will provide an estimate of the number of persons with non-English language backgrounds who have limited English-speaking ability.

Information about NCES work in the subject areas of this bulletin may be obtained from Dr. Dorothy Waggoner at (202) 245-3397.

Table 1a.-Estimated numbers of persons with non-English-language backgrounds in the United States, by language and age group: Spring 1976

(Numbers in 1,000's)

Non-English-language background	Total	Age 5 and under	Age 6 to 18	Age 19 and older
Total	27,985	2,224	5,032	20,730
Selected European languages	22,475	1,766	4,263	16,446
French	1,932	83	303	1,546
German	2,735	70	286	2,378
Greek	542	41	88	412
Italian	2,931	99	296	2,536
Polish	1,498	24	87	1,387
Portuguese	489	29	77	383
Russian	228	(*)	17	209
Scandinavian languages	661	(*)	29	624
Spanish	10,609	1,384	3,022	6,203
Yiddish	852	26	58	768
Selected Asian languages	1,842	220	301	1,321
Chinese	537	57	81	399
Filipino languages	522	69	103	351
Japanese	439	30	40	370
Korean	194	35	31	128
Vietnamese	150	30	46	74
Arabic	190	26	22	143
Navajo	159	22	54	83
Other languages	3,319	191	391	2,738

*Less than an estimated 15,000 persons.

NOTE.—Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding.

SOURCE: Survey of Income and Education, conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census spring 1976.

Table 1b.-Estimated numbers of native-born persons[1/] with non-English-language background in the United States, by language and age group: Spring 1976
(Numbers in 1,000's)

Non-English-language background	Total	Age 5 and under	Age 6 to 18	Age 19 and older
Total	18,529	2,028	4,051	12,450
Selected European language	15,604	1,655	3,550	10,399
French	1,509	75	273	1,161
German	1,711	63	243	1,406
Greek	285	41	60	184
Italian	1,984	95	241	1,648
Polish	1,175	23	82	1,070
Portuguese	247	23	38	187
Russian	128	(*)	17	109
Scandinavian languages	435	(*)	23	406
Spanish	7,663	1,304	2,515	3,845
Yiddish	466	24	58	384
Selected Asian languages	654	163	131	359
Chinese	153	45	39	69
Filipino languages	157	56	56	45
Japanese	267	21	26	220
Korean	54	28	(*)	16
Vietnamese	23	(*)	(*)	(*)
Arabic	87	23	15	49
Navajo	157	22	54	81
Other languages	2,027	165	301	1,561

1/ Persons born in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other U.S. territories.

*Less than an estimated 15,000 persons

NOTE.--Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding.

SOURCE: Survey of Income and Education, conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, spring 1976.

Table 1c.-Estimated numbers of foreign-born persons with non-English-language backgrounds in the United States, by language and age group: Spring 1976
(Numbers in 1,000's)

Non-English-language background	Total	Age 5 and under	Age 6 to 18	Age 19 and older
Total	9,454	196	981	8,278
Selected European languages	6,869	111	713	6,045
French	423	(*)	30	385
German	1,023	(*)	43	972
Greek	257	(*)	29	228
Italian	947	(*)	55	888
Polish	322	(*)	(*)	317
Portuguese	241	(*)	39	196
Russian	100	(*)	(*)	99
Scandinavian languages	226	(*)	(*)	219
Spanish	2,944	(*)	507	2,357
Yiddish	386	(*)	(*)	384
Selected Asian languages	1,188	56	170	961
Chinese	384	(*)	42	330
Filipino languages	365	(*)	47	305
Japanese	171	(*)	(*)	149
Korean	140	(*)	21	112
Vietnamese	127	17	46	65
Arabic	104	(*)	(*)	94
Navajo	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)
Other languages	1,292	26	90	1,176

*Less than an estimated 15,000 persons.

NOTE.—Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding.

SOURCE: Survey of Income and Education, conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, spring 1976.

Table 2.—Estimates of total population and of persons with non-English-language backgrounds and of total school-age children, 6 to 18, and school-age children with non-English-language backgrounds in the United States, by region and State: Spring 1976
(Numbers in 1,000's)

Region and State	Total population (all ages)	Population with non-English-language backgrounds		Total school-age children (age 6-18)	School-age children with non-English-language backgrounds	
		Number	Percent of total		Number	Percent of total
All States	211,537	27,985	13	50,326	5,032	10
Northeast	48,820	9,104	19	11,267	1,333	12
Connecticut	3,065	587	19	716	77	11
Maine	1,056	134	13	259	22	8
Massachusetts	5,751	952	17	1,346	109	8
New Hampshire	818	125	15	200	17	8
New Jersey	7,244	1,375	19	1,697	182	11
New York	17,833	4,433	25	4,073	758	19
Pennsylvania	11,670	1,292	11	2,656	140	5
Rhode Island	913	196	21	206	21	10
Vermont	469	46	10	114	(*)	6
Southeast	52,962	2,928	6	12,677	520	4
Alabama	3,589	50	1	886	(*)	1
Arkansas	2,126	43	2	503	(*)	1
Delaware	576	40	7	140	(*)	4
Florida	8,498	1,177	14	1,810	194	11
Georgia	4,910	103	2	1,200	27	2
Kentucky	3,375	52	2	829	(*)	(**)
Louisiana	3,746	624	17	1,000	140	14
Maryland	4,059	295	7	989	48	5
Mississippi	2,329	25	1	615	(*)	1
North Carolina	5,383	88	2	1,291	22	2
South Carolina	2,785	47	2	723	(*)	1
Tennessee	4,186	48	1	971	(*)	1
Virginia	4,915	240	5	1,168	38	3
West Virginia	1,793	42	2	407	(*)	(**)
District of Columbia	693	59	8	145	(*)	4
North Central	57,022	5,024	9	13,918	606	4
Illinois	10,994	1,473	13	2,655	223	8
Indiana	5,262	283	5	1,283	47	4
Iowa	2,873	152	5	690	16	2
Kansas	2,228	135	6	520	22	4
Michigan	9,077	852	9	2,318	91	4
Minnesota	3,890	405	10	988	26	3
Missouri	4,707	193	4	1,096	24	2
Nebraska	1,530	121	8	367	16	4
North Dakota	622	98	16	162	(*)	4
Ohio	10,634	817	8	2,524	104	4
South Dakota	672	61	9	166	(*)	3
Wisconsin	4,570	436	10	1,149	27	2
Northwest	8,094	655	8	1,940	106	5
Alaska	346	50	14	98	15	15
Idaho	828	56	7	208	(*)	6
Montana	747	60	8	191	(*)	4
Oregon	2,293	160	7	524	25	5
Washington	3,503	295	8	826	39	5
Wyoming	377	31	8	92	(*)	6
Southwest	44,619	10,237	23	10,524	2,468	23
Arizona	2,274	533	23	555	161	29
California	20,997	5,221	25	4,786	1,105	23
Colorado	2,537	360	14	616	82	13
Hawaii	843	293	35	206	53	26
Nevada	602	73	12	146	(*)	9
New Mexico	1,155	507	44	316	154	49
Oklahoma	2,681	128	5	624	36	6
Texas	12,308	3,041	25	2,952	846	29
Utah	1,222	83	7	322	19	6

*Less than an estimated 15,000 persons.
**Less than an estimated 0.5 percent.

NOTE.--Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding.

SOURCE: Survey of Income and Education conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, spring 1976.

TABLE 3.—Estimated numbers of persons with non-English-language backgrounds in States with 100,000 or more such persons, by totals and selected language groups: Spring 1976
(Numbers in 1,000's)

States with 100,000 or more non-English language background persons	Total persons with non-English-language backgrounds	Selected European-language backgrounds					Selected Asian-language—b/ backgrounds	All other Non-English language backgrounds
		Total	French	German	Italian	Spanish		
Northeast								
Connecticut	587	511	97	34	167	78	(*)	71
Maine	134	128	108	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)
Massachusetts	952	821	187	26	159	87	21	110
New Hampshire	125	116	87	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	
New Jersey	1,375	1,159	28	112	357	378	34	183
New York	4,433	3,789	182	301	995	1,473	184	460
Pennsylvania	1,292	839	(*)	129	277	120	25	428
Rhode Island	196	184	63	(*)	52	(*)	(*)	(*)
Southeast								
Florida	1,177	1,070	64	71	79	684	32	74
Georgia	103	62	(*)	(*)	(*)	25	16	25
Louisiana	624	604	524	(*)		60	(*)	
Maryland	295	202	24	41	29	39	30	64
Virginia	240	135	25	24		44	42	62
North Central								
Illinois	1,473	1,150	29	231	105	401	67	256
Indiana	283	201	(*)	68	(*)	69	(*)	69
Iowa	152	106	(*)	63	(*)	18	(*)	42
Kansas	135	104	(*)	57	(*)	32	(*)	22
Michigan	852	630	53	127	88	85	37	185
Minnesota	405	306	(*)	114	(*)	20	17	82
Missouri	193	147	(*)	75	31	16	(*)	36
Nebraska	121	86	(*)	42	(*)	23	(*)	33
Ohio	817	561	41	186	115	87	30	225
Wisconsin	436	360	15	165	23	27	(*)	68
Northwest								
Oregon	160	107	(*)	30	(*)	34	29	25
Washington	295	195	(*)	50	(*)	68	48	52
Southwest and Hawaii								
Arizona	533	405	(*)	20	(*)	341	(*)	114
California	5,221	4,098	137	274	263	2,970	717	405
Colorado	360	312	(*)	52	(*)	212	(*)	34
Hawaii	293	21	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	242	31
New Mexico	507	410	(*)	(*)	(*)	391	(*)	95
Oklahoma	128	58	(*)	24	(*)	26	(*)	58
Texas	3,041	2,851	54	123	19	2,566	63	127

*Less than an estimated 15,000 persons.

a/ Includes French, German, Greek, Italian, Polish, Russian, Scandinavian languages, Spanish and Yiddish.

b/ Includes Chinese, Filipino languages, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese.

NOTE.—Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding.

SOURCE: Survey of Income and Education, U.S. Bureau of the Census, spring 1976

SURVEY OF INCOME AND EDUCATION
APPROXIMATE STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATED NUMBERS[1/]

Size of estimate	Standard error
15,000	9,000
25,000	11,000
50,000	16,000
75,000	19,000
100,000	22,000
150,000	27,000
250,000	34,000
500,000	50,000
750,000	61,000
1,000,000	70,000
1,500,000	86,000
2,500,000	110,000
5,000,000	155,000
7,500,000	189,000
10,000,000	217,000
15,000,000	263,000
25,000,000	331,000
50,000,000	437,000
75,000,000	494,000
100,000,000	519,000
150,000,000	486,000

1/ The standard errors given above, provided by the Census Bureau, are based on some distributions from the 1970 Census and on some factors derived from other sources, not on direct calculations from the sample data. When direct calculations are made, it is likely that most of the standard error estimates will be somewhat lower than these.